

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

IO-11 OMB-01 CU-02 EB-07 AID-05 /090 W

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R 230700Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4252

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 1912

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BG, PK

SUBJECT: PAK/BD RELATIONS

1. EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH REGULAR WORKING RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH APPEAR TO BE ON TRACK. TELECOMMUNICATION LINKS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE OPENED ON A TRIAL BASIS ON FEBRUARY 14 WITH ONE TELEPRINTER AND ONE TELEPHONE LINE IN OPERATION. ACCORDING TO MFA DIRECTOR (BANGLADESH AZMAT HASSAN, REGULAR COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS SHOULD COMMENCE WITHIN A FEW DAYS AS SOON AS AGREEMENT IS REACHED ON A SUGGESTED SCHEME FOR PREFERENTIAL RATES. PAKS ARE AWAITING A

RESPONSE TO RATE PROPOSAL WHICH THEY SENT TO DACCA, HASSAN TOLD EMBOFF.

2. POSTAL LINKS, ACCORDING TO HASSAN, SHOULD ALSO BE OPENED SOON. AS MAIL WILL BE SENT THROUGH BANGKOK (BOTH AIR AND SURFACE), CONCURRENCE ON POSTAL RATES IS NECESSARY FROM BOTH THE THAIS AND THE BANGALEES. THIS
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IS NOW BEING SOUGHT.

3. BOTH TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND POSTAL RATES, PAK Z HOPE, WILL BE ON A PREFERENTIAL BASIS; FOR THE FORMER, AS NOW APPLIES TO PAK/IRANIAN MESSAGES, AND FOR THE LATTER, AT THE PAK INLAND RATE. HASSAN SAYS THAT PREFERENTIAL SCHEME WOULD BE IN KEEPING WITH THE FRATERNAL SPIRIT PREVAILING BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS BUT CERTAINLY IS NOT INTENDED TO SIGNIFY THAT POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THEM WOULD BE ANYTHING BUT THOSE BETWEEN TWO SOVEREIGN STATES.

4. DIRECTOR TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE HOPED THAT TECHNICAL LEVEL TALKS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR LINKS WILL BEGIN WITHIN A MONTH OR SO. BANGLADESH'S BIMAN AIRLINE, HE SAID, COULD EASILY STOP OVER IN KARACHI ON ITS BOMBAY-EUROPE LEG. (REGARDLESS OF WHERE BIMAN STOPS HERE, FACT THAT THEY HAVE INDIAN OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS MAKES IT MUCH EASIER FOR THEM TO SET UP OPERATIONS THAN FOR PIA WHICH OF COURSE DOES NOT.) PAKS ARE CURRENTLY STUDYING PRACTICALITY OF DACCA STOPOVER ON PIA KARACHI-BANGKOK FLIGHTS. DIFFICULTY WHICH THIS POSES, HASSAN SAID, IS ADDITION OF EXTRA TWO HOURS TO SCHEDULE. THEREFORE, PIA MIGHT WANT TO INSTITUTE A KARACHI-DACCA AND RETURN FLIGHT.

5. THE BANGLADESH MISSION HERE HAS NOW MOVED INTO REGULAR EMBASSY FACILITIES IN ISLAMABAD AND HAS BECOME SOCIALLY ACTIVE. WE MEET THE BANGALEES QUITE OFTEN AT RECEPTIONS AND PARTIES. AMBASSADOR ZAHIRUDDIN OPENED AN EXHIBITION OF PAKISTANI PAINTINGS IN RAWALPINDI LAST WEEK.

6. PRESS COVERED ANNOUNCEMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS LINKUP IN LOW KEY MANNER. VERNACULAR TAMEER CALLED FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADE LINKS WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY. NATIONALIST, ANTI-INDIAN NAWA-I-WAQT, QUITE IN CHARACTER, SAID INDIA IS MAIN HURDLE TO ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADE TIES. PAPER FEBRUARY 17 SUGGESTED GIFT OF PIA BOEING (707) TO BANGALEES IF THEY ARE SHORT OF AIRCRAFT.
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